

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT


For the reasons briefly presented below and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment and other supporting references enumerated below, I have determined that the proposed alternative (p.9, section 2.2.1 of EA) of constructing an interchange at the intersection of Highways 10 and 45 just south of the Rat River which includes taking land at the Wisconsin Rat River Wildlife Area (with exchange for new lands) is the selected alternative and is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment with the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An Environmental Impact Statement will, accordingly, not be prepared.

Reasons:

1. There are no known or anticipated endangered, threatened or candidate species or designated critical habitat that will be adversely affected (p. 13, section 3.2.2.3 of EA and attached Intra-Service Section 7 form).
2. No known historic properties will be affected (p. 14, section 3.4.1 of EA).
3. Two archaeological sites are located in the selected area for the interchange; one will be unaffected and the second will be the subject of data collection to determine whether it is eligible for the National Register of Historic Properties. If the site is eligible for registry, a mitigation plan will be prepared and approved prior to an action that may affect the site (p. 14, section 3.4.2 of EA). The second site is on private property adjacent to the Rat River Wildlife Area (p. 25, Table 3).
4. A total of 32 acres of land at the Rat River Wildlife Area will be taken (p. 16, section 4.1.1 of EA) and replaced with 55 acres that are within the border of the Wildlife Area (p. 17, section 4.1.2) of similar habitat types.
5. No long-term build up of chlorides from use of road salts is anticipated during future management of the interchange (p. 20, section 4.1.5).
6. There will be no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on either minority or low-income communities (p.20, section 4.1.6).
7. Only one public comment was received during the public comment period, which only generally opposed use of wildlife areas for developing roads.
8. An EIS was previously prepared and approved for the general routing of the highway which incorporated the intersection area.

Supporting References:

1. Environmental Assessment (EA)
2. Phase 1 form for Section 7 Endangered Species consultation
3. Public comments


ACTING **Marvin E. Moriarty**
Regional Director, FWS, Region 3

Date: 10/26/01

Distribution FA Project File
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